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Chairman: Mr. Wolfe ..... (Jamaica)
later: Mr. Gibbons ..... (Ireland)

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* Items which the Committee has decided to consider together.

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda item 106: Crime prevention and criminal justice (A/62/84, 126 and 127; A/C.3/62/L.2 and 3)

Agenda item 107: International drug control (A/62/117)

1. **Mr. Costa** (Executive Director, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)) said that, although drug control, crime deterrence and the prevention of terrorism could be tackled separately, it would be an error to do so: drugs, crime and terrorism interacted at a profound level with peace, security, development and the rule of law. They should therefore be dealt with in the context of a country's overall aspirations. The architecture for a safer world should be based on a strong social foundation and the rule of law, ensuring development, security and peace. That was not an idealistic prototype but could be applied to the real world. The Office's work was testimony to the fact that drug control, crime deterrence and the prevention of terrorism were essential to the construction of safe and healthy societies. By the same token, healthy, competitive and open societies could cope more easily with evil behaviour.

2. With regard to illicit drugs, the experience of UNODC was that development was crucial to reducing the world's supply of drugs. Rural communities in Afghanistan, South East-Asia and the Andean territories needed long-term assistance to reduce their dependence on opium, coca and cannabis. For that reason, UNODC worked with funding partners, including development banks, to ensure that farmers could find sustainable alternatives to drug crops. Otherwise, illicit cultivation would persist or else the destruction of crops would be the cause of a humanitarian tragedy.

3. There was no better way to eradicate drug crops than action by farmers themselves to return to legality and a decent livelihood. It was, however, no coincidence that the regions of the world where most drugs were cultivated were outside government control, for example the southern Afghanistan, the Shan State of eastern Myanmar and the insurgency-controlled regions of western Colombia. Areas where the rule of law was weak were also magnets for drug traffickers. Trafficking routes most often traversed war zones, failing regions and States where corruption was rife. A vicious circle was perpetuated thereby, since illicit activity made such areas even more unstable by perverting the local economy, deepening corruption and eroding the integrity of public institutions.

4. The countries of Central America, the Caribbean and West Africa, in particular, were caught in the crossfire of drugs and crime. The tragedy of Guinea-Bissau and neighbouring countries was well documented: the whole region was under attack by cocaine traffickers. It needed assistance to strengthen criminal justice, develop crime prevention strategies and promote long-term social and economic development. He called for assistance from rich countries, especially in Europe, the destination of most of the cocaine. There were lessons to be learned from more prosperous regions, as well, such as the Balkans, which were similar crossroads of crime, trafficking, corruption and instability.

5. One important factor was the need for effective justice. A major part of the work of UNODC was therefore to help States strengthen the rule of law, including prison reform, witness protection programmes and measures to counter money-laundering and kidnapping. In Afghanistan and Central Asia, the Office helped establish drug control agencies, build border posts, strengthen the judiciary and improve interdiction. It had set up counter-narcotic intelligence centres in the Persian Gulf and Central Asia. It had launched a trilateral initiative between Afghanistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan to facilitate border control and legal cooperation; and it was hoped that similar arrangements could be made between Afghanistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Turkmenistan. UNODC also assisted States in Africa to strengthen their judicial capacity and reduce the continent's vulnerability. He commended the African Union's plan of action on drugs and crime, which was to be adopted at its Ministerial Conference later in the year. It was also gratifying that Mexico and the Central American States were shortly to adopt a similar strategy at their regional summit in Guatemala in December 2007.

6. Security, development and the rule of law, while essential for drug control, in themselves, were not sufficient. Society as a whole must be involved, especially in the reduction of drug addiction and, as a consequence, HIV/AIDS. Despite sensationalist stories in the media about how the world was flooded with illicit drugs, leading to calls for their legalization, the evidence from the *World Drug Report 2007* showed

that drug control was working, worldwide. The situation with regard to almost every kind of illicit drug — cocaine, heroin, cannabis or amphetamine-type stimulants — showed signs of overall stability, whether in relation to cultivation, trafficking, production or consumption. Although the problem did not appear to be getting worse, however, there remained 25 million problem drug users in the world.

7. It was therefore important to ensure that the number of such users should not increase and that the 200 million occasional drug users should not become hard-core addicts. Secondly, problem drug users must be helped to reduce the damage that they did to themselves and others. It would be a painful process; but, in ratifying the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, States had recognized that addiction to narcotic drugs constituted a serious evil for the individual and was fraught with social and economic danger to mankind.

8. UNODC worked with Member States to improve drug prevention, treatment and rehabilitation, so that drug addicts could receive help rather than be punished or stigmatized. It was strengthening its partnership with the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT) and the World Health Organization (WHO) to promote safer and healthier communities. The Office also worked to reduce the risk for injecting drug users of contracting and spreading blood-borne diseases such as HIV/AIDS, especially in the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), eastern Europe and India.

9. Drug control should not be the domain of law enforcers or health-care workers alone; it should involve the whole of society. Community-centred prevention meant working with children to ensure that they got the love, encouragement and support that they needed to develop self-esteem. Family-based programmes should be given greater support, since prevention began at home. Young people should have the opportunity to engage in healthy and constructive activities; and in that context, he expressed his appreciation to Qatar for promoting such an approach through the Global Sport Fund. The media, too, had an important role to play, providing information and promoting drug control campaigns. A campaign similar to the one on drinking and driving should be waged against driving under the influence of drugs. In short, UNODC promoted a holistic approach to drug control.

10. The Office also dealt with the issue of trafficking in persons. Long hidden in the shadows, the phenomenon persisted in almost every country, manifesting itself in various tragic ways: underage girls sold by families to foreign tourists; teenagers duped into prostitution; child soldiers; sex slaves; people working in mines or sweatshops; or domestic servants receiving no pay. It stripped people of their rights, robbed them of their dignity and could even kill. Yet there was much ignorance about it, owing to denial and lack of awareness, although evidence of its existence was everywhere.

11. The vulnerability of the victims usually arose from poverty, cultural deprivation and ignorance, whatever country they were in. UNODC tried to sensitize consumers against creating a demand for the goods and services provided by victims of trafficking. A broad social basis to fight human trafficking was the secret to success. To that end, UNODC, with other members of the United Nations family, had recently launched the Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking (UN.GIFT). The aim was to mobilize a wide spectrum of society, to broaden knowledge of such trafficking and to step up technical assistance. Evidence-gathering and discussion sessions had been held in South Africa and India, and others would shortly follow in Brazil, Côte d'Ivoire and Thailand. He urged the Committee to support the Initiative.

12. Another threat to the architecture of a safer world was corruption. It subverted development by reducing investment and stealing public money. It undermined democracy and the rule of law. It even posed a security threat by enabling criminals to infiltrate State structures and weaken the security apparatus through bribery. UNODC therefore assisted Member States to implement the United Nations Convention against Corruption, which, he noted, had entered into force within two years of its adoption: a record for United Nations conventions. The Office also encouraged the introduction of preventive measures like transparent tender processes, official disclosure of earnings by public officials and clear rules for the funding of political parties. In countries as diverse as Brazil, Indonesia, Algeria and Tajikistan, it was also assisting with independent anti-corruption agencies, developing financial intelligence units and strengthening judicial integrity.

13. A major breakthrough was occurring in the field of asset recovery. Thanks to the joint World Bank/UNODC

Stolen Asset Recovery (StAR) Initiative launched in September 2007, countries would have a better chance of preventing public funds from being stolen. Public attitudes were changing. There was less tolerance of corruption. Not many years previously, corruption had been considered normal in politics; yet many corrupt governments were being voted out of office and corrupt companies named and shamed. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) were demanding greater transparency, and journalists were exposing corruption. UNODC was working with other United Nations institutions to strengthen integrity within the United Nations itself.

14. An essential part of the work of UNODC related to terrorism. In addition to its security aspects, terrorism had a negative impact on development, driving away investment, tourism and business and diverting resources from other public expenditure. UNODC helped States to strengthen their legal regime against terrorism. The rule of law must be the basis of any such regime. Terrorists were, after all, criminals and should, therefore, be brought to justice on the basis of evidence, with cooperation — often all too lacking — among law enforcement agencies, shared information and mutual legal assistance. The legal assistance provided by UNODC was unmatched, since it had experience of the cross-cutting links between drugs, crime and terrorism.

15. In its work, the Office followed the guidance given by Member States when they became parties to international legal instruments on crime, drugs and terrorism. More recently, Member States had supported the adoption of its medium-term strategy. He urged them to continue that support with the adoption of the UNODC budget. He looked forward to further political guidance at forthcoming meetings of the Conference of States Parties for the United Nations Conventions against Transnational Organized Crime and against Corruption, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and at the Twelfth Crime Congress. UNODC was also ready to help States tackle emerging threats like cyber crime, environmental crime and nuclear terrorism.

16. Calls for technical assistance from UNODC were becoming increasingly frequent and owing to the doubling of increased voluntary funding for its activities over the past five years, it was in a better position to carry out its mandate. He noted, however, that the resources available to UNODC were smaller than the annual expenditure by the city of New York on garbage disposal. The paucity of resources was partly offset by the fact that the Office no longer bore its responsibility alone: there was closer cooperation with other members of the United Nations family, and partnerships with international financial institutions, the private sector and civil society were being strengthened.

17. **Mr. Cabral** (Guinea-Bissau) said that drugs, trafficking in persons, corruption and terrorism were a cancer on human society, attacking particularly those States that lacked the structural means to resist. He was glad that the Executive Director of UNODC had mentioned Guinea-Bissau, which had seen the foundations of its society under attack by drugs and the drug money used to finance political activities and destroy the body politic, with disastrous consequences for development. Real international cooperation was needed. He hoped that the States that received drugs would be willing help his country not only with money but also with technology and expressed gratitude for the assistance provided to it by UNODC.

18. **Mr. Saeed** (Sudan) commended the emphasis that the Executive Director of UNODC had laid on the prime importance of development. He regretted, however, that the Executive Director had made no reference to the important work done by the African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFRI) and the cooperation between it and UNODC. Fostering development was a good starting point for addressing the problem of drugs. The important role played by the African Institute deserved attention. His delegation urged donor countries to help to strengthen the Institute.

19. **Mr. Degia** (Barbados) said that his delegation pledged its full support for and cooperation with UNODC. The publication of the May 2007 UNODC report, entitled *Crime and Development in Central America: Caught in the Crossfire*, served only to highlight the serious contradiction inherent in the decision to close its regional office in Barbados, which had served 29 States and Territories. Barbados and the States members of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) were neither suppliers nor major consumers of illicit drugs. They were neither arms producers nor exporters.

20. Nevertheless, because of their geographical position and external factors largely beyond their

control, those States were affected by the scourge of transnational organized crime, the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and drug trafficking. Small countries with limited resources had a vital need for international cooperation and assistance. The presence of the UNODC office in Barbados had been extremely important to the Caribbean region. He, therefore, failed to understand why the region was being marginalized and its problems ignored given the grave situation on the ground.

21. **Mr. Costa** (Executive Director, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)), replying to the representative of Guinea-Bissau, said that, indeed, Africa, especially sub-Saharan Africa, had previously never had a serious drug cultivation or addiction problem. Nevertheless, in the light of the severe interdiction measures taken to prevent cocaine from Andean countries from entering the United States of America and Europe and of Africa's vulnerability owing to limited capacity and resources, traffickers had turned to Africa to establish bases and had fostered corruption among army, police and government officials, and instability in the West African region. Organized crime required instability in order to succeed. Lastly, the influx of drugs posed a threat to public health which had not previously existed. The Office was reviewing the situation and making every effort to build capacity and promote judicial and penal reform.

22. He concurred with the representative of Sudan on the need for development to combat crime and corruption. Good and strong governance was also a key factor. He regretted that he had failed to mention the African Institute. Such institutions helped UNODC to understand the situation on the ground so that it could provide advice and more focused technical assistance to Member States with available resources.

23. With respect to the statement by the representative of Barbados, Central America and the Caribbean had been caught in the crossfire between drug producers south of their borders and consumers in the north. UNODC had been compelled to close its office in Barbados because there had been no State willing to provide the necessary resources to maintain it. The report mentioned by Barbados had been published to draw the international community's attention to the vulnerability of the region and mobilize it to provide the necessary assistance.

24. **Mr. Makanga** (Gabon) said that he would like further clarification of the relationship between drug control, crime prevention and counter-terrorism and development, peace and security. He wondered whether other factors were equally important for enhancing such security.

25. **Mr. Babadoudou** (Benin), drawing attention to a current campaign by States to abolish the death penalty, said that he would like to hear the views of the Executive Director on the potential impact of such a campaign on his efforts to combat transnational organized crime.

26. **Mr. Costa** (Executive Director, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)), replying to the representative of Gabon, said that UNODC had published a report on crime and development in Africa which showed that Africa was extremely vulnerable to crime. First, half of its population was under 30. Secondly, it experienced mass poverty and unemployment. Thirdly, many African countries were affected by civil war, either directly or indirectly, which made weapons readily available. Fourthly, the gap in income between the richest and poorest was much greater than in Europe or the United States of America. Fifthly, Africa's rate of urbanization was the fastest growing rate in the world. People were flocking to cities without any basic amenities, including electricity and water. Sixthly, Africa spent approximately one tenth of what Western Europe and North America spent on judicial systems.

27. The weak judicial system made corruption a significant problem in Africa. Such factors made places like Africa and the Caribbean vulnerable. Furthermore, the high rate of crime discouraged foreign investment. Domestic savings tended to be invested abroad. White collar workers migrated abroad for better wages. UNODC was not proposing, however, increasing the number of policemen. Rather, only development could break the vicious circle of crime and poverty.

28. With respect to drugs, crime and terrorism, in the case of Afghanistan, it was clear that the high level of illicit activities prevailing in that country was rooted not only in poverty but also lack of control over the national territory. When combined, those two conditions allowed crime, drug trafficking and terrorism to flourish.

29. Concerning the question raised about the death penalty, the United Nations stood for its abolition. No

one had the right, including organized institutions such as Governments, to take the lives of others. Furthermore, it had been shown that severe sentences did not necessarily translate into lower crime rates. Therefore, the abolition of the death penalty was needed throughout the world.

30. **Ms. Martins** (Portugal), speaking on behalf of the European Union, the candidate countries, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey, the stabilization and association process countries and possible candidates, Iceland and Montenegro, said that her delegation supported the work of the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme in fostering international cooperation in combating crime, in particular through its technical cooperation capacity.

31. The European Union remained committed to providing technical assistance to third countries, in particular developing countries, in the area of crime prevention and criminal justice. It was also committed to completing the process of ratification of the Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols thereto as soon as possible. The European Union was also developing mechanisms to facilitate police and judicial cooperation between States, relating, in particular, to joint investigations, extradition, mutual legal assistance in criminal matters and asset recovery.

32. The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime provided a useful global tool to combat human trafficking. The European Union supported the efforts of UNODC to facilitate negotiations on the Protocol and to promote the Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery. Corruption was an obstacle to sustainable development and good governance. Her delegation encouraged all parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption to work towards its successful implementation.

33. Countering international terrorism remained high on the agenda of the European Union. Her delegation commended the work of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force and called for its appropriate funding without delay. The United Nations Counter-Terrorism Online Handbook had also been very useful in helping to implement the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. The European Union stood ready to assist the Task Force in implementing the Strategy and would focus on important issues such as preventing radicalization and securing human rights while fighting terrorism.

34. The European Union continued to engage in political and technical dialogue and cooperate with key countries and regions on the basis of the principle of shared responsibility. With international drug-related cooperation projects amounting to some 760 million euros in 2005, the European Union was the largest international contributor and a leading player in global efforts against drugs. The international community must endeavour to find ways to react promptly to new challenges such as the growing presence of drug-trafficking organizations in fragile States and HIV/AIDS transmission via intravenous drug use.

35. The European Union and UNODC must work together to avoid duplication and to address the problem of drug use, drug dependence and drug-related health and social consequences. The European Union stood ready to seek common platforms with other groups and regions, always bearing in mind the need to ensure a balanced approach between demand reduction and supply reduction of illicit drugs.

36. **Mr. Maziya** (Swaziland), speaking on behalf of the States members of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), said that crime prevention, criminal justice improvement and international drug control were intertwined pursuits. SADC Governments were determined to jointly fight organized crime, but lack of human, financial and material resources hampered the administration of justice. The international community's assistance in combating crime was valuable and should continue in view of the commitments made at the Eleventh United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice regarding the issues addressed in the report entitled "Bangkok Declaration on Synergies and Responses: Strategic Alliances in Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice" (A/CONF.203/18): transnational organized crime, international cooperation against terrorism, corruption, economic and financial crimes, crime prevention standards and criminal justice.

37. Technical cooperation was indispensable to democracy and contributed to peace and stability. Regional cooperation initiatives, such as human rights training programmes carried out by the Southern

African Regional Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization (SARPCCO), were under way. SARPCCO carried out joint operations to locate clandestine drug-manufacturing laboratories and provided assistance to certain countries in the eradication of cannabis fields. The impact of the drug problem was particularly acute on developing countries. The Political Declaration adopted at the twentieth special session of the General Assembly and the related action plans and measures emanating from the session constituted a high-level comprehensive commitment.

38. Significant progress had been made towards meeting the 2008 goals set in that framework. A review process focused on the implementation of commitments made at the special session would be helpful in view of further action. SADC welcomed recommendations made by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs at its fiftieth session, as contained in the Secretary-General's report (A/62/117), regarding the inclusion of measures against drugs in sustainable economic development strategies. Moreover, SADC supported the conclusions of the 2005 Round Table for Africa, which had been held in Abuja and had endorsed a Programme of Action, 2006-2010 addressing crime, insecurity and underdevelopment in Africa.

39. The current proliferation of hard drugs on the continent gave particular cause for concern. SADC worked with other regional and international anti-drug trafficking organizations, such as INTERPOL, and welcomed the meeting of heads of African National Drug Services, held in Arusha on in July 2007. That meeting had addressed, inter alia, cocaine and heroine smuggling in Africa's subregions, synthetic-drugs trafficking in southern Africa and continent-wide cannabis production, consumption and export. Long and porous borders coupled with insufficient resources had been identified as a major problem. International cooperation, in the form of information exchange and joint operations, should be enhanced. SADC welcomed the implementation of several initiatives launched by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) with a view to strengthening regional cooperation in southern Africa.

40. International drug trafficking had become a financial pillar of international terrorism, which found fertile ground in developing countries. A training workshop for southern Africa countries on international cooperation in the fight against terrorism and its financing held in December 2006 had recommended that UNODC and its partners should provide SADC member States with technical assistance in incorporating the provisions of universal legal instruments on terrorism into national legal systems and with training for criminal justice and law enforcement officials. Accordingly, a workshop for SADC countries had been organized to promote training in the implementation of Security Council resolutions on terrorism.

41. UNODC support to the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and its subsidiary bodies and to Member States through technical assistance, legal advice and research was commendable, and further help should be provided in implementing the provisions of the international legal instruments on drug trafficking, including preventive measures, criminalization and enhanced international cooperation. The United Nations African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, which had the potential to assist States to develop tailored initiatives and programmes against crime and strengthen criminal justice systems, required support by the international community. Such backing was also needed in the areas of police equipment and judiciary and correctional services in the region.

42. The increasing number of training activities for law enforcement officials, judges, prosecutors and prison officers had been encouraging. It was essential to provide police practitioners with the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for thorough research, crime-trend analysis, victim- and offender-profile generation and identification of key information for crime prevention. Advisory services should continue to be provided in the areas of national legislation reform and compliance with international criminal justice standards.

43. **Mr. Dapkiunas** (Belarus), speaking on behalf of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), said that the CIS commended the report of the Secretary-General on strengthening the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme, in particular its technical cooperation capacity (A/62/126), and emphasized the need to provide adequate funding for UNODC. The work of the Office was essential in combating international crime.

44. His delegation welcomed the entry into force of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. The United Nations Global

Counter-Terrorism Strategy was a strong basis for combating international terrorism. The lack of an internationally agreed legal definition of terrorism complicated counter-terrorism efforts. His delegation, therefore, supported the prompt negotiation of a comprehensive convention on international terrorism.

45. As trafficking in illicit drugs posed a major threat to CIS countries, his delegation called for the adoption of a range of regional and international measures to combat them. Combating corruption was another priority for Belarus. It therefore welcomed the work done at the first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption. The CIS members were making concerted efforts to combat money-laundering and prevent the proceeds of crime from financing terrorist activities.

46. His delegation noted with concern the problem of illegal migration, which was being used by organized criminal groups as well as by terrorist and extremist organizations as a cover for their activities. He drew attention to General Assembly resolution 61/180 on improving the coordination of efforts against trafficking in persons and commended the Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery.

47. Belarus had led efforts at the 2005 World Summit to form a global partnership to combat that scourge. It welcomed the establishment of the UNODC website on human trafficking and looked forward to the Vienna Forum to be held in February 2008. He regretted that the inter-agency coordination group on trafficking in persons had not begun its work and called on the international community to finance it adequately. Lastly, his delegation called on all States to support the proposal to hold thematic discussions on human trafficking during the sixty-second session of the General Assembly.

48. **Mr. Saeed** (Sudan) said that his country was making efforts to implement regional and international agreements to fight money-laundering, human trafficking, and transnational organized crime. The United Nations African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, whose Governing Board the Sudan currently chaired, had made great efforts with limited resources. The Sudan called on donors to provide the Institute with sufficient funding and looked forward to continued support for it from sister States in Africa. Although his country itself did not have a serious drug problem, its geographic location meant that its territory might be used by drug smugglers as a transit zone, and it would continue its efforts to strengthen regional cooperation to eradicate the scourge of drugs. In the age of globalization, eradication of globalized crime demanded greater coordination and, in particular, technical support and capacity-building for developing countries.

49. **Mr. Hayee** (Pakistan) noted that, along with various advantages, globalization had facilitated transnational crime, with such negative effects as financial scams, money-laundering, human trafficking and illicit drugs trafficking, which were a growing concern for Governments and civil society. Poverty, social exclusion and lack of prospects were the main causes of vulnerability to drug abuse. Since criminal organizations took advantage of political instability and socio-economic weakness, the most appropriate solutions to crime-related problems in the world's less developed areas were alternative development and livelihood practices and poverty eradication programmes.

50. Pakistan had succeeded in eliminating illicit crops through a combination of law enforcement measures, alternative development initiatives and contributing to international efforts aimed at stopping the outflow of drugs from the neighbouring region and the inflow of precursor chemicals for drug production. His Government had signed 26 memorandums of understanding and 28 extradition treaties with other countries and had set up the National Response Centre for Cyber Crimes and the Automated Finger Print Identification System. Moreover, special anti-human trafficking and anti-cyber crime units had been established in the Federal Investigation Agency; a personal identification and evaluation system had been set up to easily identify travellers and monitor immigration efficiently; in cooperation with the Asian Development Bank, a programme had been launched for criminal justice reform and for promoting police accountability and responsiveness; and a special anti-narcotics force had been organized to provide drug-related preventive education, treatment and rehabilitation.

51. UNODC could more effectively promote universal accession to sectoral conventions on terrorism and to crime-related legal instruments by taking into account the specific political conditions prevalent in States and regions. Moreover, special

attention should be paid to emerging trends that characterized urban crime, fiscal misappropriation, identity-related crime, sexual exploitation, trafficking in women and children and the illicit trade in forest products. To that end, UNODC should receive full financial and political support.

52. **Ms. Phommachanh** (Lao People's Democratic Republic) said that, since aggressive counter-narcotic measures did not suffice for stemming drug-trafficking, concerted action by drug-producing and drug-consuming countries was required. Her country had once been the world's third largest producer of illicit opium and, in 1998, had displayed the highest rate of opium addiction. As a State party to three international conventions on narcotic drugs, the Lao People's Democratic Republic had taken various measures to eliminate illicit opium poppy cultivation, including the adoption of a national programme strategy in 2000 and the enactment of appropriate legislation. As a result, poppy cultivation had been reduced by more than 93 per cent. Moreover, the Lao Government had improved the drug-control legal framework and strengthened law-enforcement capacity to reduce drug trafficking.

53. However, it was still necessary to provide all former opium poppy farmers with sustainable alternative livelihoods, to treat some 12,000 remaining opium addicts and prevent new cases of addiction, to address the growing problems of amphetamine-type stimulant (ATS) abuse and trafficking, and to strengthen the relevant legislative, judicial and law-enforcement capacities. The problems requiring such action were compounded by the related issues of human trafficking, injection drug use (IDU) and risk of HIV/AIDS infection.

54. In view of those issues, the Lao Government and UNODC had jointly adopted for the period 2006-2009 a three-year "national programme strategy for the post-opium scenario", which mainly addressed the root causes of opium production and abuse and focused on long-term socio-economic development for reducing poverty among former opium poppy growers, comprehensive treatment and rehabilitation for the remaining opium addicts, preventive education to discourage drug use among young people and law enforcement. The strategy further addressed the ever greater threat of ATS trafficking and abuse. However, to ensure that those tasks were effectively carried out, coordinated support by partner countries in the region and by the international community was urgently needed.

55. **Ms. Jahan** (Bangladesh), underlining that crime was both the cause and consequence of poverty, insecurity and underdevelopment, said that combating and preventing crime were a major concern for her Government, which considered criminal justice reform and affordability as policy priorities. Specific reforms had been carried out, including the establishment of a monitoring cell and a rapid action battalion for violent crimes.

56. With regard to the UNODC strategy for the period 2008-2011, she stressed the need for further strengthening the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme and the role of its Commission, building strategic partnerships with donors to mobilize resources and developing cooperation with other United Nations bodies. The growing number of countries adhering to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime was encouraging. Compliance with the treaty and mobilization of assistance to States with scarce resources were keys to effective transnational crime control. Accordingly, her country supported all relevant regional and international initiatives in this regard.

57. At the national level, her country had taken legislative measures to streamline criminal justice and crime prevention. Bangladesh had acceded to the United Nations Convention against Corruption, which was expected not only to reduce corruption, but also to help recover ill-gotten proceeds hoarded abroad. The national Anti-Corruption Commission had been reorganized and aimed at raising public awareness of the problem. Progress had been made with regard to the separation of the judiciary from the executive. Bangladesh had recently acceded to the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, was currently a party to all terrorism-related United Nations conventions and supported relevant regional commitments and initiatives through the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Regional Convention on Suppression of Terrorism.

58. In 2007, the Government had enacted a money-laundering prevention ordinance, empowering the Anti-Corruption Commission to investigate offences in the area in question. A new money-laundering prevention act was being prepared. Bangladesh welcomed the Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking initiated

by UNODC and in 2002 had ratified the SAARC Convention on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Women and Children for Prostitution. The 1993 Suppression of Immoral Trafficking Act was a major piece of domestic legislation in that area.

59. Committed to tackling all aspects of the drug problem, Bangladesh had ratified the three major United Nations drug conventions of 1961, 1971 and 1988 and the 1990 SAARC Convention on Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. The national authorities regularly sent reports on drug cases, arrests and seizures to the SAARC Drug Offences Monitoring Desk in Colombo and exchanged information on drug trafficking with other SAARC countries. Bangladesh had signed a number of bilateral agreements and memorandums of understanding with other countries to stem drug trafficking and the diversion of precursor chemicals and was ready to expand such cooperation.

60. The Government had also enacted legislation in line with the United Nations drug conventions. The law provided for harsh penalties for drug offenders. Opium and cannabis were totally prohibited. Psychotropic substances had been included in the category of controlled drugs in compliance with the 1971 United Nations Convention on Psychotropic Substances. The Government has also formulated a national drug demand reduction strategy comprising preventive education, treatment and rehabilitation programmes.

61. **Ms. Blum** (Colombia) said that Colombia's results had borne testimony to its commitment to drug control. The World Drug Report 2007, published by UNODC, had acknowledged Colombia's progress and had highlighted the unprecedented level of eradication achieved: the number of hectares of coca bush under cultivation had fallen by 52 per cent between 2000 and 2006.

62. The holistic approach of UNODC had placed much emphasis on social reconstruction, community and institution-building, environmental protection and the promotion of productive projects, all of which had contributed to her country's success. The work of UNODC had also been important in restoring a sense of hope for communities that had abandoned illicit drug production. Alternative development was an essential component of sustainability in areas rescued from the influence of drug trafficking. In that vein, Colombia wished to stress the need for market access, on preferential terms, for products originating in those communities.

63. In Colombia, the fight against drugs was a vital component of the strategy to consolidate democracy and social development. None of Colombia's efforts would be effective without shared responsibility, nor would they have been possible without the support of the international community. Every gap created by globalization was exploited by drug traffickers to endanger the well-being, public health, sustainable development and sovereignty of States. In that regard, the connection between international terrorism and the world drug problem was increasingly evident. The illicit gains of drug trafficking often financed terrorist acts.

64. Colombia was irrevocably committed to working at the bilateral, regional and multilateral levels in efforts to cope with the global threat posed by the drug problem. Bearing in mind the upward trend in cocaine use in Europe, and taking into account the fact that the drug problem could be effectively solved only through demand and supply reduction, Colombia joined previous speakers in their appeal for holistic and sustained assistance, approaches and policies. A strategy based on the cumulative knowledge of the world drug market dynamics would serve as an effective tool to stabilize the market and encourage overall reduction. The international community should not limit its efforts to containing the problem, but, rather, should aim at defeating the criminal enterprises that perpetuated it.

65. **Mr. Park** Hee-kwon (Republic of Korea) said that, with rapid technological advances and deepening globalization, the control of narcotic drugs was an issue that called for a greater level of shared responsibility among nations, international organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Despite the commendable work of the United Nations and other international bodies, much remained to be done in terms of controlling substances such as cocaine, opium, synthetic drugs, cannabis and precursor chemicals. The laws, regulations, techniques and skills available to law enforcement agencies for the identification and seizure of drugs could not keep apace of trends in drug production and smuggling. The issue of rampant opium production in southern Afghanistan, in spite of the Government's sincere efforts, was a typical example that warranted serious

attention and assistance from the international community.

66. The Republic of Korea wished to continue its active role in pooling efforts with other States and international organizations in order to achieve a drug-free world. He reaffirmed his Government's commitment to the goals and targets on demand and supply reduction, as set by the twentieth special session of the General Assembly. Transnational organized crime, corruption, terrorism and cyber-crime had emerged as major threats to global security and development. No single country could eliminate those crimes through its own capabilities. As part of its commitment to strengthening the collective effort, the Republic of Korea had been working closely with UNODC and the United Nations Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice.

67. **Mr. Jia** Guide (China) said that, according to the World Drug Report 2007 issued by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the world's drug problem was being contained, and the area of land under cultivation for illegal drugs continued to decrease. Member States had made notable progress towards achieving the goals set forth at the twentieth special session of the General Assembly. His delegation viewed that progress as the result of the common efforts of counter-narcotics agencies and Governments over many years. However, the world drug problem remained serious, and counter-narcotics efforts faced a long and difficult road. For counter-narcotics work to stabilize its effectiveness, three areas required special attention. The first was places of concentrated production, such as Afghanistan for opium, which should be addressed on a priority basis. China supported any effective international cooperation to deal with the drug problem in Afghanistan and was willing to continue participating in the Paris process.

68. The second area was the dual approach, by which not only drug production but the demand for drugs were addressed. Drug-producing and -consuming countries shared the responsibility to take coordinated action in that regard. The third was addressing the roots of the problem, by not only eradicating drug production but also taking measures to ensure food security and reduce poverty in drug-producing areas. China supported the discussion and evaluation of progress made towards the achievement of the counter-narcotics goals of the special session, the reviewing of implementation of the relevant measures, and the setting of goals for future counter-narcotics work.

69. For many years, China had undertaken counter-narcotics work from the viewpoint of building a harmonious society and had accomplished much in formulating national counter-narcotics strategies and legislation and mobilizing popular participation in counter-narcotics activities, as well as in creating counter-narcotics publicity, addiction-recovery programmes, interdicting drug flows and counter-narcotics law enforcement. His country emphasized the importance of regulating chemical precursors, as well as cooperation among Government agencies responsible for customs, commerce, security and pharmaceuticals in that regard. China consistently took an active role in fulfilling its obligations under international counter-narcotics agreements, undertaking cooperation with all relevant actors with regard to developing substitutes, exchanging information and enforcing unified legislation. It had provided aid in substitute-crop production to Myanmar and Laos for many years, and in 2006 had signed a cooperation agreement with Afghanistan on prohibiting the trade in and use of narcotics and psychotropic drugs. It was also undertaking counter-narcotics law-enforcement cooperation with neighbouring countries, the United States of America, Canada and Australia.

70. While narcotics were coming under greater control, the problems of organized transnational corruption, money-laundering, terrorism, and human trafficking were becoming more serious around the globe, and it was the shared responsibility of the international community to combat those phenomena. China was pleased to note that increasing numbers of countries had signed the United Nations Convention against Corruption and the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime providing a legal foundation for combating and controlling criminal activity of all kinds as well as for international cooperation on extradition, cooperative law enforcement, the return of property, and technical assistance. The Government had recently established its own anti-corruption body at the ministerial level, responsible for coordinating anti-corruption work throughout the country, coordinating legislation and policy formulation as well as supervisory guidelines. That action not only greatly increased the efficacy of China's internal anti-corruption efforts but also

enhanced its ability to undertake exchanges and cooperation at the international level.

71. China sincerely hoped that concerned countries would make use of the existing international agreements and other possible cooperation mechanisms to broaden law-enforcement cooperation, especially in the areas of extradition, legal assistance, and the return of property and provide the necessary technical support to developing countries in order to raise their ability to fulfil their treaty obligations and thus achieve genuine implementation of the regulations of those treaties. China had taken note of the progress made in the Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery and was actively participating in the implementation process. It looked forward to the upcoming Vienna Forum in February 2008, in the hope that it would be an important venue for exchanging information and experience in combating human trafficking. China thanked UNODC and the Commission on Narcotic Drugs for their excellent work over the past year and expressed its continuing support for their future efforts in those fields.

72. **Ms. Abdelhak** (Algeria) said that international cooperation was crucial in formulating an effective response to transnational organized crime, the perpetrators of which used increasingly advanced technologies to destabilize the political, social and economic development and security of States. The link between organized crime and terrorism further complicated efforts to counter crime.

73. Algeria welcomed the international instruments on transnational organized crime and corruption as major assets which would be strengthened by ratification, and by Member States' support for the work of the Conferences of the Parties. Universal ratification of those instruments would allow the international community to close legislative loopholes and contradictions that criminal organizations exploited to their benefit. Harmonization of legislation would also strengthen and consolidate the work of the Conferences of the Parties by providing a forum for the sharing of experience and practices.

74. Her delegation welcomed the efforts of UNODC to achieve universal acceptance and the harmonization of laws. Member States should use the UNODC manuals and provide UNODC with data that would assist the Office in its analyses. They should also participate in forums on the various aspects of transnational crime, and share their experience.

75. Algeria was aware of the dangers posed by transnational crime and its growing links to terrorism, having been a victim of terrorist attacks for more than a decade. Not only had Algeria ratified the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, and its Protocols and the United Nations Convention against Corruption, her Government had promptly incorporated them into domestic legislation and adapted the judicial apparatus in order to keep pace with developments. Algeria had always supported UNODC and attached high priority to fulfilling its reporting obligations and responding to the Office's questionnaires.

76. Drug trafficking posed a constant threat to the health, security and well-being of mankind, in particular to young people, and had generated new problems for societies worldwide, constituting a grave trend that necessitated international cooperation and urgent global action. Since Algeria had become a transit State for drugs, the Government had taken on the challenge of drug control by focusing on legislation, drug treatment and public information.

77. However, domestic efforts alone would not be enough to stem the flow of drugs through its territory since neighbouring drug-producing centres and clandestine immigration fuelled cross-border trafficking. Regional and international cooperation should be at the centre of UNODC strategy for the period 2008-2011, as it was the only approach that was likely to stem the drug trade. Lastly, her Government fully supported the review of progress achieved in meeting the goals and targets set by the twentieth special session of the General Assembly.

78. **Ms. McCampbell** (United States of America) said that drug abuse in the United States was stable, and overall illicit drug use among teenagers was at a five-year low. However, there was no room for complacency since drug use, especially the misuse of prescription drugs, continued to be a problem. Drug use was also on the rise worldwide and there was need for vigilance.

79. The rising trend in the production, trafficking and abuse of methamphetamine was of great concern. Its illicit manufacture offered huge profits because it could be produced easily, at low cost, and anywhere. It was a challenge to ensure that legitimate pharmaceutical

manufacturers had access to the chemicals that they needed, while preventing their diversion for illegitimate commerce.

80. The International Narcotics Control Board was a particularly effective partner in the fight against methamphetamine. Estimates provided by States of their legitimate domestic needs for key precursor chemicals had made it possible for diversion to be more accurately identified, making it increasingly difficult for traffickers to operate.

81. Illegal trafficking of controlled pharmaceuticals through the Internet was another emerging trend that required greater awareness. Criminal elements used every opportunity to broaden their expertise. Support for the United Nations instruments on organized crime and corruption would intensify international efforts to counter such expansion, and strengthen mutual cooperation in confronting cross-border crimes. The United States was pleased to announce that it would contribute $1.7 million to UNODC in 2007 for technical assistance in the implementation of the Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Convention against Corruption.

82. A global campaign should be launched to maintain pressure on drug traffickers and the networks that were responsible for drug addiction in many countries. Attacking drugs at their source was the most effective means of keeping them off the market. Although there had been tremendous progress in that regard there remained some concern that drug traffickers were consolidating their activities and had joined forces to undermine Governments. For example, in Afghanistan, despite the stringent measures imposed to confront drug trafficking, one third of the economy was opium-based. That had led to widespread public corruption, jeopardized economic growth and strengthened the insurgency. However, the 13 northern provinces, where public security was strong and alternative development programmes had been initiated, were now free of poppy production.

83. Curbing the opium trade in Afghanistan was a long-term challenge and would require the support of all Member States. The same was true elsewhere in the world, and the international community should assume the responsibility to prevent backsliding in meeting the commitments of the twentieth special session of the General Assembly. Joint training and operations could pay significant dividends, and it was hoped that the review process would identify further ways of expanding cooperation. The lessons learned by Member States and regional organizations were indispensable, and it was crucial that United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime received the full support of all stakeholders.

84. **Mr. Tanin** (Afghanistan) said that his country was strongly committed to fighting the narcotics trade, corruption and terrorism, through a mix of law enforcement and economic measures. UNODC had supported the Ministry of Counter Narcotics in drafting strategic guidelines, mobilizing resources to address the problems associated with drug production and trafficking, and in backing the Government's efforts to fight corruption.

85. The continued support of the international community in facilitating the implementation of a comprehensive counter-narcotics strategy and an anti-corruption plan of action was indispensable. In January 2006, Afghanistan had adopted a comprehensive strategy, outlining the key areas on which the fight against illicit narcotics trading would focus. Since then, numerous measures had been undertaken by the Government, but serious challenges remained. According to an August 2007 survey, poppy cultivation had increased by 17 per cent and potential opium production by 34 per cent. Continued terrorist activity, extreme poverty, and economic constraints, coupled with pressure from traffickers and local criminal groups and the limited capacity of the law enforcement bodies had led to the expansion of poppy cultivation.

86. Insecurity and the narcotics trade were intertwined, and both needed to be approached holistically. There had been some success in creating 14 poppy-free provinces in areas where security and governance had improved, but poppy cultivation had risen to unprecedented levels in southern Afghanistan, where the security situation had deteriorated. Therefore, focus must be placed on simultaneously breaking the nexus between narcotics and terrorism.

87. International support for Afghanistan's efforts to break the link between illegal drug production and trafficking and the financing of terrorist activities was also vital for achieving a stable and peaceful State. The Government was grateful for the support of the international community, including the specialized agencies, especially in the eradication of poppy crops,

prosecution of drug traffickers and corrupt officials, and assistance in boosting development throughout Afghanistan.

88. Clearly, success in the fight against narcotics would require equal effort on the part of transit and consumer States, based on the principle of shared responsibility. Stringent enforcement measures for border controls and mutual cooperation among judicial and law enforcement authorities of those countries would contribute greatly to the fight against narcotic drugs. In that regard, he welcomed the 2007 trilateral agreement signed by Afghanistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan on increased joint border operations and information sharing.

89. The fight against narcotics required patience and collaboration at the international, regional and subregional levels. Efforts to combat drug trafficking had been inherently linked to attempts to improve security and good governance, strengthen the rule of law, and promote social and economic development. The fight against corruption remained among Afghanistan's top priorities for State-building. An anti-corruption commission had been established as one such initiative. Lastly, Afghanistan's recent ratification of the United Nations Convention against Corruption represented an important step in its fight against corruption, which was an ongoing process requiring institutional capacity-building.

90. **Mr. Masambasita** (African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFRI)) said that the Institute regarded crime as a major obstacle to harmonious and sustainable socio-economic development in Africa, and he appealed to development organizations and other institutions to give greater consideration to the impact of crime on development. Member States and the broader international community should support UNAFRI financially since it was a regional mechanism, which, given the necessary resources, could contribute meaningfully to reducing poverty and improve access to public services.

91. The Institute was keenly aware of the devastating impact of crime on national economies. As a centre for providing expertise in the areas of crime control and prevention, and bearing in mind the regular requests for technical assistance from African States, UNAFRI was determined to do more to combat crime and to strengthen the rule of law and the criminal justice systems in member countries. As a mechanism for regional integration, the Institute's main thrust had been to encourage Member States to sign and ratify the relevant international instruments and to incorporate those provisions into domestic legislation in order to strengthen their crime prevention capacity.

92. Funding from the United Nations and other sources would boost the effectiveness of UNAFRI in meeting the needs of African States. In that context, therefore, he reiterated the appeal made by the Institute's Governing Board to the General Assembly to consider favourably the resolution for mobilizing support from the United Nations regular budget, as stated in paragraph 42 of the Secretary-General's report on UNAFRI (A/62/127).

The meeting rose at 6.25 p.m.